

KAHAL KADOSH BETH ELOHIM

90 Hassell Street, Charleston

Charleston's Beth Elohim synagogue is regarded as the birthplace, in 1824, of Reform Judaism in America. Originated by German Jews early in the 19th century, the movement first sought to modernize traditional worship by introducing choral singing and organ music, and using languages other than Hebrew in services. Eventually a critical reevaluation of Jewish theology developed from the movement. Beth Elohim's congregation was established in 1749 and had become the largest Jewish community group in the country by the end of the 18th century. The Greek Revival temple, dating from 1840, is the third-oldest synagogue extant in the United States.